

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



Draft ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS MEPA/NEPA CHECKLIST



LONE PINE STATE PARK Parking Lot and Entrance Road Improvement Project

MISSION. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations

All Montanans have the right to live in a clean and healthful environment. This brief environmental analysis is intended to provide an evaluation of the likely impacts to the human environment from proposed actions of the project cited below. This analysis will help Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to fulfill its oversight obligations and satisfy rules and regulations of both the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project sponsor has a responsibility to ensure that all impacts have been addressed. Some effects may be negative; others may be positive. Please provide a discussion for each section. If no impacts are likely, be sure to discuss the reasoning that led to your determination.

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed action:

Development ☒ X

Renovation ☐

Maintenance ☐

Land Acquisition ☐

Equipment Acquisition ☐

Other (Describe) ☐

2. If appropriate, agency responsible for the proposed action:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (FWP)

3. Name, address phone number and E-mail address of project sponsor:

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Lone Pine State Park Manager
dlandstrom@mt.gov
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4573

4. Name of project: Lone Pine State Park Parking Lot and Entrance Road Improvement Project.

5. If applicable:

Estimated construction/commencement date: Spring 2007

Estimated completion date: Spring 2007

Current status of project design (% complete): 50

6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township): Lone Pine State Park; Flathead County, Section 24, Township 28 north, Range 22 west

7. Project size: estimate the numbers of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (a) Developed: | (b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation |
| residential.....__ acres | <u>3</u> acres |
| industrial.....__ acres | |
| (c) Wetlands/Riparian | (d) Floodplain.....__ acres |
| Areas.....__ acres | |
| (e) Productive: | |
| irrigated cropland.__ acres | |
| dry cropland.....__ acres | |
| forestry.....__ acres | |
| rangeland.....__ acres | |
| other.....__ acres | |

8. Map/site plan: Attach an original 8½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5 series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

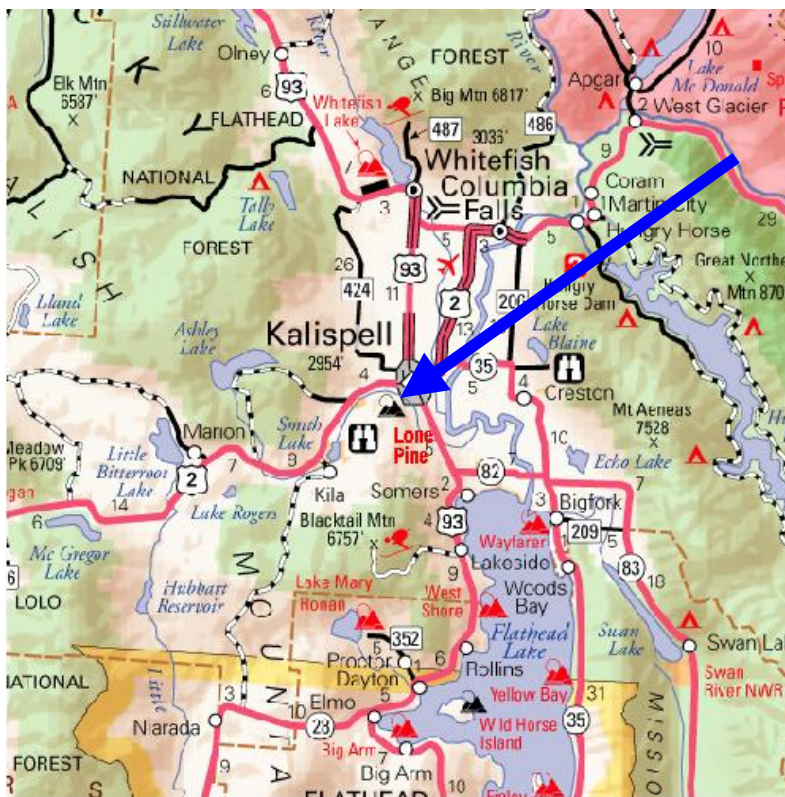


Figure 1. Map of Kalispell area showing location of Lone Pine State Park.

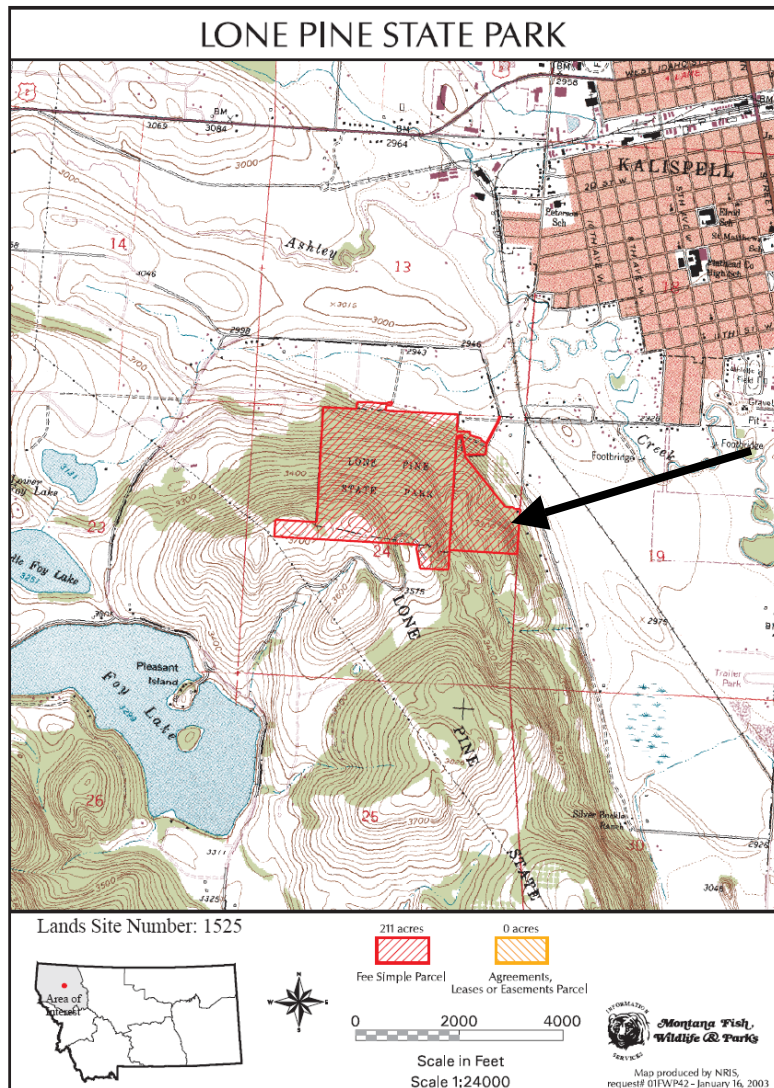


Figure 2. Site map of Lone Pine State Park. Approximate location of proposed project shown by arrow.

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes upgrading the existing Lone Pine State Park gravel parking lot and access road located on Valley View Drive by paving them with hot asphalt concrete, and slightly enlarging the parking area at the same time. Minor reshaping and regrading of the parking area and access road is necessary, as well as minor drainage improvements, prior to paving. These improvements are intended to 1) reduce maintenance measures associated with gravel surfaces, 2) accommodate more vehicles/visitors to the trailhead parking area, 3) improve maneuverability for vehicles within the parking area, 4) reduce dust particulates to nearby residents, and 5) reduce wear and tear on visitors vehicles.

The Lone Pine State Park Trailhead parking area and access road was constructed in 2003. The new construction included a typical roadway section consisting of six inches of base topped with three inches of gravel surfacing. The new access road traverses steep terrain, which has necessitated frequent maintenance due to the significant amount of vehicular traffic that use the access road. Vehicles continue to create “washboard” sections where the gravel surfacing has raveled due to vehicle tire slippage. Current roadway conditions leading up to the trailhead parking area can be seen in Figure 3.



FWP Region 1 personnel have proposed further improvements to the parking area and access road by paving all driving surfaces to limit annual maintenance and to reduce roadway dust from vehicle traffic. To accomplish this, a three-inch lift of hot asphalt concrete pavement would be used to support the parking area and access road traffic. The hot asphalt concrete pavement would consist of a performance-grade asphalt binder (PGAB) material with aggregate gradation requirements supplied by local commercial sources. Prior to paving, all driving surfaces would require reshaping and regrading to assure proper drainage. This work would include setting grade stakes (blue tops) transversely and longitudinally and may require a minor amount of additional surfacing material.

Finally, the parking area may be painted to identify parking spaces, which will help facilitate traffic flow and minimize congestion. Parking space painting will consist of placing four-inch yellow stripes of pavement marking paint.

Parking Area Expansion

In addition to paving the driving surfaces, FWP proposes expansion of the trailhead parking area to accommodate additional vehicles. During the past

several summers this parking area has been filled to capacity (approximately 10 vehicles) on a regular basis, and park personnel expect visitation numbers to increase further in the future. Additional parking spaces are needed to accommodate these visitors. Park personnel have identified the southwest corner of the parking lot as an area where the lot could be expanded to provide approximately five additional parking spaces. This area has been disturbed in the past and is primarily vegetated with nonnative quack grass. No trees would need to be removed for the expansion. The proposed southern expansion of the parking area is shown in Figure 4. In addition, Region 1 personnel have indicated that the parking area can also be expanded approximately ten feet to the east (see Figure 5) as well to assist vehicles in pulling in and backing out of parking spaces. Waste materials from the southern expansion area could be utilized here.



The parking area expansion work would involve excavation, roadway base, and surfacing placement of hot asphalt concrete pavement. Incidental items such as signing and basic landscaping may be included.

The planned parking area expansion is limited by FWP property boundaries. Park personnel are working with adjacent landowners to address concerns of the close proximity of the parking area to these borders. An existing earthen berm and vegetative screening would be extended to shield the view of parked vehicles from nearby residents.

Minor Drainage Improvements

Prior to paving, improvements are necessary to remedy inadequate drainage and to control erosion. Plans of the current roadway and parking area indicate that no drainage features were installed at the time of initial construction. A subsequent field review revealed areas of roadway erosion due to surface run-off. Two locations have been identified as sites to install drainage culverts under the access road to alleviate this problem. Figure 6 shows one of the areas proposed for a cross-drain culvert installation under the roadway.



10. **Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives** (including the required No Action Alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a comparison of the alternatives with the proposed action/preferred alternative:

In the **No Action Alternative A**, the proposed improvements would not occur at the Lone Pine Trailhead and access road. The implications of the No Action Alternative would be 1) continued deterioration of the access road, 2) constant maintenance of the access road because of the poor condition, 3) continued

shortages of parking spaces for visitor vehicles, and 4) continued hazards for visitors attempting to park and back out of spaces without adequate room for optimal maneuverability.

In the **Preferred Alternative B**, FWP would proceed with the proposed improvements at Lone Pine State Park. These improvements include paving the access road and trailhead parking area and slightly expanding the parking area to increase vehicle maneuverability and add approximately 5 additional spaces. These upgrades will help to ensure access to the Park's features, will improve safety, reduce maintenance time, reduce dust, and reduce wear on staff and visitor vehicles.

In **Alternative C**, FWP would pave the parking area and access road, but would wait to expand the parking area at a later time. This alternative was ultimately rejected because completing the project in two stages would have been considerably more expensive overall, because heavy equipment would have had to be brought to the site two separate times, two separate environmental assessments would have had to be prepared, etc.

11. Listing of each local, state, or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction:

(a) Permits		
Agency Name: NA	Permit:	Date Filed:

(b) Funding	
Agency Name: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Funding Amount: \$53,580

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities	
Agency Name: N/A	Type of Responsibility:

12. List of agencies consulted during preparation of this Environmental Checklist:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Parks Division

Wildlife Division

Fisheries Division

Design & Construction Bureau

Lands Division

Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)

13. Name of preparer(s) of this environmental checklist:

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14. Date submitted: December 5, 2006

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Land Resources” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X		yes	1b.
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

FWP proposes paving the Lone Pine Trailhead parking lot and access road and slightly enlarging the parking lot to accommodate five more vehicles and increase maneuverability within the lot. The project is limited in scope, and most of the land affected by this project is already disturbed.

- 1b. The proposed projects would result in minor disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss and over-covering of soil. These negative effects can be mitigated by following Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the duration of the project. Disturbed areas not covered by parking or road would be reseeded or otherwise reclaimed.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Air” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on air resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

2. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c))			X			2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. Any discharge that will conflict with federal or state air quality regs?		X				
f. Other		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

MFWP proposes paving the Lone Pine Trailhead parking lot and access road and slightly enlarging the parking lot to accommodate five more vehicles and increase maneuverability within the lot. The project is limited in scope is not expected to produce any long-term effects.

- 2a. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions will be created by heavy equipment during construction. Dust levels will be reduced from current levels after completion because the parking areas and access road will be paved.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Water” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on water resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

3. WATER	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			3b.
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. Effects to a designated floodplain?		X				
m. Any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations?		X				
n. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

FWP proposes paving the Lone Pine Trailhead parking lot and access road and slightly enlarging the parking lot to accommodate five more vehicles and increase maneuverability within the lot. There are no water bodies adjacent to the trailhead or access road that would be affected by the proposed projects.

3b. Paving the parking area and access road will likely increase surface run-off. However, the impact is expected to be minor.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Vegetation” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on vegetative resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			4a.
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X			4b.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c.
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. Effects to wetlands or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

- 4a. The expansion of the parking area will reduce the abundance of existing vegetation in the expansion area. The site is primarily vegetated with quack grass (*Elytrigia repens*), which is nonnative and generally considered to be a weedy species, so this effect is considered to be minor. No trees will be removed in the course of the proposed project.
- 4b. Please see Comment 4a.
- 4c. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Database did not yield any plant Species of Concern in the search area.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Fish/Wildlife” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on fish and wildlife resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

5. FISH/WILDLIFE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				5b.
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				5c.
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				5f,
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5g.
h. Adverse effects to threatened/endangered species or their habitat?		X				5h.
i. Introduction or exportation of any species not presently or historically occurring in the affected location?		X				
j. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

No cumulative or secondary effects are expected to resident fish and wildlife from the proposed project.

5b. It is unlikely that the proposed project would cause any changes in the diversity or abundance of game or nongame species due to the project’s small scope and the previous disturbance of and current public use of the site.

5c. Please see Comment 5b.

5f. Please see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of threatened and endangered species in the Lone Pine State Park area.

5g. The proposed improvements might cause a small increase in site visitation, which could cause additional stress to wildlife populations. Also, the use of heavy equipment to pave and enlarge the parking area and access road could cause stress to wildlife. However, since it is assumed that resident wildlife are already fairly accustomed to human presence and noise, this impact is expected to be minor.

5h. Please see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of threatened and endangered species in the Lone Pine State Park area.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Noise/Electrical Effects” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of noise and electrical activities. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			x			6a.
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

While the proposed project would cause a temporary increase in noise during construction, overall vehicular noise from the parking area and access road should be reduced, because driving on pavement is much quieter than on gravel. In addition, an existing earthen berm and vegetative screening will be extended to help buffer noise from the parking area.

- 6a. There would be a temporary increase in noise level during the project, but it would not be excessive and would end after completion.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Land Use” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land use. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects.

7. LAND USE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. A conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. A conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on, or relocation of, residences?			X		yes	7d.
e. Compliance with existing land policies for land use, transportation, and open space?		X				
f. Increased traffic hazards, traffic volume, or speed limits or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
g. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposed project would not alter or interfere with the productivity or profitability of existing land use in the area. The proposed project would support existing land use for the area (public lands) without causing conflict with land use on adjacent lands. The expansion of the parking lot might slightly affect adjacent homeowners because the enlarged lot will be more visible, but the effect is expected to be minor. The project is not anticipated to have any secondary or cumulative effects on land use in the area.

- 7d. The proposal to increase the size of the parking area would make it more visible to adjacent homeowners, but an earthen berm and landscaping would be extended to provide visual screening of the lot. The proposed project would cause a temporary increase in noise during construction, but overall, noise from vehicular traffic on the access road and in the parking area should be reduced because driving on pavement is quieter than on gravel. In addition, the earthen berm would help to buffer noise from the parking area.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Risk/Health Hazards” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of risks and health hazards. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X			8a.
b. Effects on existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. Disturbance to any sites with known or potential deposits of hazardous materials?		X				
e. The use of any chemical toxicants?		X				
f. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to slightly enlarge the parking area at Lone Pine State Park and pave the access road and parking lot is small in scope and does not involve major risks or health hazards. The project is not anticipated to have any secondary or cumulative effects on those parameters.

- 8a. There would be a minor risk of small petroleum spills from heavy equipment during construction. The risk is probably not much greater than from private vehicles that are on the site on a daily basis.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Community Impact” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on the community. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X			9e.
f. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to slightly enlarge the parking area at Lone Pine State Park and pave the access road and parking lot is small in scope and is not expected to impact the community of Kalispell. The project is not anticipated to have any secondary or cumulative effects on the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of Kalispell or surrounding communities; alter the social structure, level or distribution of employment or personal income; or cause changes in industrial or commercial activity.

- 9e. Visitation to the Lone Pine State Park might increase slightly after completion of the proposed project, resulting in more vehicles entering and exiting the park. In addition, the movement of heavy equipment into and out of the park during implementation of the proposed project would create very minor traffic hazards. Neither potential impact is expected to be significant.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Public Services/Taxes/Utilities” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on public services, taxes and utilities. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. An effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered, governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If so, specify:		X				
b. Effects on the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. A need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. Other.		X				
Additional information requested:						
f. Define projected revenue sources.	Parks Capitol Fund \$53,580					
g. Define projected maintenance costs.	Same as current costs					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to slightly enlarge the parking area at Lone Pine State Park and pave the access road and parking lot is small in scope and is not expected to result in any increased need for any public services or utilities. There would not be any effect on the local or state tax base or revenues. Maintenance costs for the parking lot and access road are expected to be slightly less or approximately equal to current maintenance costs. While there would be less maintenance of the road surface itself, there would likely be more snowplowing and sanding.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Aesthetics/Recreation” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on aesthetics & recreation. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)						11c.
d. Adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas?		X				
e. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to slightly enlarge the parking area at Lone Pine State Park and pave the access road and parking lot is small in scope and is not expected to cause any adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails, or wilderness areas. However, the project is expected to have a positive impact on the aesthetic character of Lone Pine State Park, as paved parking lots and roads are generally thought to be more aesthetic than gravel ones.

11c. Please see Tourism Report in Attachment A.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Cultural/historical Resources” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on cultural/historical resources. Even if you checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, historic or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical changes that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Adverse effects to historic or cultural resources?		X				
e. Other:		X				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to slightly enlarge the parking area at Lone Pine State Park and pave the access road and parking lot is small in scope and is not expected to cause the destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance. The State Historic Preservation Office was consulted prior to the original construction of the access road and parking area, and the proposed modifications do not extend beyond the boundaries of the original consultation area.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Summary Evaluation of Significance” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects. Even if you have checked “none” in the table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources, which create a significant effect when considered together, or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if, they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. Have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		X				
Additional information requested:						
g. List any federal or state permits required.			NA			

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The proposal to pave the access road and trailhead parking area and expand the parking area at Lone Pine State Park is small in scope and is not expected to result in any significant impacts to the human or physical environment of the park or surrounding area. The proposed project would improve access and driving and parking conditions at the park and has considerable public support.

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Discuss the cumulative and secondary effects of this project as a whole.

There are no anticipated cumulative effects of this project. A possible secondary effect is that the improvements will cause a small increase in visitation, beyond what might be expected based on area growth, etc. This effect would not be significant if it did occur.

2. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this Environmental Checklist (Part II), is an EIS required?

YES _____

NO X

If an EIS is not required, explain why the current checklist level of review is appropriate.

Based on an evaluation of the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA), this environmental review found no significant impacts from the proposed site improvements in Lone Pine State Park. In determining the significance of the impacts, FWP assessed the severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the impact; the probability that the impact would occur or reasonable assurance that the impact would not occur; growth-inducing or growth-inhibiting aspects of the impact; the importance to the state and to society of the environmental resource or value affected and precedent that would be set as a result of the proposed action that would commit FWP to future actions; and potential conflicts with local, federal, or state laws. Therefore, an EA is the appropriate level of review and an EIS is not required.

3. Describe the public involvement for this project.

The public will be notified by way of two statewide press releases, and legal notices in the *Daily Inter Lake* (Kalispell) and the *Helena Independent Record*, and by public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web site: <http://.mt.gov/publicnotices>.

Individual notices will be sent to the region's standard EA distribution list and to those that have requested one.

4. What was the duration of the public comment period?
A 30-day comment period is proposed. This level of public involvement is appropriate for this scale of project.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affected Environment – The aspects of the human environment that may change as a result of an agency action.

Alternative – A different approach to achieve the same objective or result as the proposed action.

Categorical Exclusion – A level of environmental review for agency action that do not individually, collectively, or cumulatively cause significant impacts to the human environment, as determined by rulemaking or programmatic review, and for which an EA or EIS is not required.

Cumulative Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that, individually, may be minor for a specific project, but, when considered in relation to other actions, may result in significant impacts.

Direct Impacts – Primary impacts that have a direct cause and effect relationship with a specific action, i.e. they occur at the same time and place as the action that causes the impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) – The appropriate level of environmental review for an action that either does not significantly affect the human environment or for which the agency is uncertain whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.

Environmental Assessment Checklist – An EA checklist is a standard form of an EA, developed by an agency for actions that generally produce minimal impacts.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – A comprehensive evaluation of the impacts to the human environment that likely would result from an agency action or reasonable alternatives to that action. An EIS also serves a public disclosure of agency decision-making. Typically, an EIS is prepared in two steps. The Draft EIS is a preliminary detailed written statement that facilitates public review and comment. The Final EIS is a completed, written statement that includes a summary of major conclusions and supporting information from the Draft EIS, responses to substantive comments received on the Draft EIS, a list of all comments on the Draft EIS and any revisions made to the Draft EIS and an explanation of the agency's reasons for its decision.

Environmental Review – An evaluation, prepared in compliance with the provisions of MEPA and the MEPA Model Rules, of the impacts to the human environment that may result as a consequence of an agency action.

Human Environment – Those attributes, including but not limited to biological, physical, social, economic, cultural, and aesthetic factors that interrelate to form the environment.

Long-Term Impact – An impact which lasts well beyond the period of the initial project.

Mitigation – An enforceable measure(s), designed to reduce or prevent undesirable effects or impacts of the proposed action.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – The federal counterpart of MEPA that applies only to federal actions.

No Action Alternative – An alternative, required by the MEPA Model Rules for purposes of analysis, that describes the agency action that would result in the least change to the human environment.

Public Participation – The process by which an agency includes interested and affected individuals, organizations, and agencies in decision making.

Record of Decision – Concise public notice that announces the agency's decision, explains the reason for that decision, and describes any special conditions related to implementation of the decision.

Secondary Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that are indirectly related to the agency action, i.e. they are induced by a direct impact and occur at a later time or distance from the triggering action.

Short-Term Impact – An impact directly associated with a project that is of relatively short duration.

Significance – The process of determining whether the impacts of a proposed action are serious enough to warrant the preparation of an EIS. An impact may be adverse, beneficial or both. If none of the adverse impacts are significant, an EIS is not required.

APPENDIX 1
HB495
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date March 29, 2006

Person Reviewing Linnaea Schroeer-Smith

Project Location: Lone Pine State Park, Flathead County, Section 24, Township 28 north, Range 22 west

Description of Proposed Work: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes to pave the access road and trailhead parking area and slightly expand the parking area in Lone Pine State Park. The project will also include some minor re-shaping and installation of culverts to improve drainage.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under HB 495 rules. (Please check all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- ☐ **A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?**
Comments: None. The access road already exists. The proposal is to pave it and slightly re-shape it.
- ☐ **B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?**
Comments: None
- ☒ **C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?**
Comments: The expansion of the parking area will likely require excavation in excess of 20 c.y.
- ☒ **D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?**
Comments: None. The expansion of the existing parking lot would increase parking capacity by 25% or more.
- ☐ **E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?**
Comments: None.
- ☐ **F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?**
Comments: None.
- ☐ **G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?**
Comments: None
- ☐ **H. Any new above ground utility lines?**
Comments: None

☐ I. **Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?**

Comments: None.

☐ J. **Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?**

Comments: None

If any of the above are checked, HB 495 rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX 2

Sensitive Plants and Animals in the Lone Pine State Park Area

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) element occurrence database (nhp.nris.state.mt.us/eoportal) indicates no known occurrences of federally listed threatened, endangered, or proposed threatened or endangered plant or animal species in the proposed project site.

Montana Species of Concern. The term "**Species of Concern**" includes taxa that are at-risk or potentially at-risk due to rarity, restricted distribution, habitat loss, and/or other factors. The term also encompasses species that have a special designation by organizations or land management agencies in Montana, including: Bureau of Land Management Special Status and Watch species; U.S. Forest Service Sensitive and Watch species; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species.

▼ Status Ranks (Global and State)

The international network of Natural Heritage Programs employs a standardized ranking system to denote global (**G** -- range-wide) and state status (**S**) (NatureServe 2003). Species are assigned numeric ranks ranging from 1 (critically imperiled) to 5 (demonstrably secure), reflecting the relative degree to which they are "at-risk". Rank definitions are given below. A number of factors are considered in assigning ranks -- the number, size and distribution of known "occurrences" or populations, population trends (if known), habitat sensitivity, and threat. Factors in a species' life history that make it especially vulnerable are also considered (e.g., dependence on a specific pollinator).

Status Ranks	
Code	Definition
G1 S1	At high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
G2 S2	At risk because of very limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
G3 S3	Potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.
G4 S4	Uncommon but not rare (although it may be rare in parts of its range), and usually widespread. Apparently not vulnerable in most of its range, but possibly cause for long-term concern.
G5 S5	Common, widespread, and abundant (although it may be rare in parts of its range). Not vulnerable in most of its range.

1. *Lynx canadensis* (Lynx).

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S3**

Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT**

U.S. Forest Service: **Threatened**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

The proposed site location falls within the boundary for element occurrence of this species but no other information is available for the project area. There is no recorded sighting of lynx within Lone Pine State Park in the Natural Heritage database and it is unlikely that lynx would utilize the habitat within Lone Pine State Park in the future because of its proximity to the town of Kalispell. In light of these facts, it is unlikely that the proposed project would affect the success of this species.

2. *Numenius americanus* (Long-billed Curlew)

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S2B**

Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

U.S. Forest Service:

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **SENSITIVE**

This bird species has been observed in areas approximately 2 miles west of the boundaries of Lost Creek State Park, but not within the park. Therefore, the proposed project would have little or no affect on this sensitive species.

ATTACHMENT A
TOURISM REPORT
MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB495

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce
PO Box 200533
1424 9th Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Project Name: Lone Pine State Park Parking Lot and Entrance Road Improvement Project.

Project Location: Lone Pine State Park ; Flathead County, Section 24, Township 28 north, Range 22 west

Project Description: The scope of this project involves upgrading the Lone Pine State Park Trailhead gravel parking lot and access road with hot asphalt concrete pavement. In addition, an expansion of the parking area is planned to accommodate additional vehicles.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?

NO

YES

If YES, briefly describe:

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?

NO

YES

If YES, briefly describe:

Signature Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, Travel Montana
Date October 10, 2006